

The President's Daily Brief

29 October 1969

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Lebanese Army leaders have determined the concessions they are willing to make to the fedayeen; it is doubtful, however, that the latter will be satisfied. (Page 1)

The Czechoslovak delegation got little in Moscow but a hearty endorsement of Husak's leadership. (Page 2)

Chancellor Brandt has outlined a broad approach to foreign policy that may run into difficulties in the Bundestag. (Page 3)

Discontent is growing in the Bolivian military over civilian radicals led by Minister of Mines Quiroga. (Page 4)

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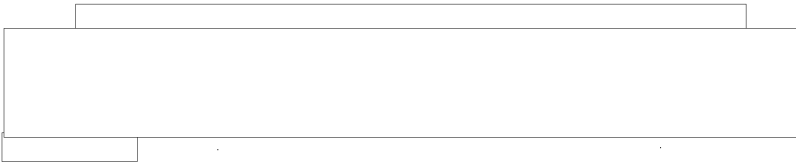
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LEBANON

The Lebanese have finally gotten their delegation to Cairo for "mediation" talks under Nasir's auspices. Armed forces commander Bustani is representing them.

Bustani seems unlikely to return to Beirut with much to comfort Hilu. He is personally not very forceful and the fedayeen are not likely to compromise except on something close to their own terms.



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USSR-CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Moscow sent the visiting Czechoslovak party-state delegation home yesterday with a ringing verbal endorsement of Husak's leadership, but little else. The joint statement issued at the departure of the delegation mentioned neither a hard-currency loan nor a partial withdrawal of troops. The most tangible result was an agreement to expand trade and economic cooperation and to sign a new treaty of friendship and alliance next year.

The Soviets apparently do not intend to give up the carrot and stick tactics that have been so effective in Czechoslovakia, despite their satisfaction with the trend of events in Prague. The Czechoslovaks had hoped that Moscow would be prepared to be more forthcoming on troop and money matters in return for Prague's reimposition of authoritarian controls.

The trade agreement will produce some additional Soviet deliveries of fuel and material, but will not help Czechoslovakia escape from its economic crisis. The friendship treaty will probably serve as window dressing for the new shape of Soviet-Czechoslovak relations.

Nevertheless, the red-carpet treatment which the delegation received and Brezhnev's glowing endorsement of Husak's leadership are indicative of Soviet satisfaction with his policies. Brezhnev endorsed Husak as "an outstanding political figure." Husak noted, however, that "normalization" has not been completed.

This means that new domestic restrictions in Czechoslovakia and further purges of the party, government, and mass organizations are likely.

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WEST GERMANY

In his official policy statement yesterday, Chancellor Brandt mapped out a broad activist course in foreign affairs, although one that carefully avoids radical departures from already established policy lines. He placed special emphasis on pumping new life into Bonn's relations with the East. He would initiate direct talks with the USSR, Poland, and East Germany, and would have the Western Allies continue to seek Soviet cooperation in alleviating sources of tension over Berlin.

While avoiding specifics, Brandt seemed to imply that his government would be more flexible in meeting Eastern demands. As a starter, he alluded to the concept--alien to West German conservatives--of two German states existing in one nation.

The Chancellor indicated that his government, while continuing its allegiance to NATO, would take a more positive attitude than previous Bonn governments toward detente measures. Bonn's special contribution in this line would include negotiation of renunciation of force agreements with East European governments and signature of the NPT in due course. Hewing to a cautious line on the European Community, Brandt called for its strengthening and broadening. Although he endorsed British entry, he also spoke of the need for German-French harmony.

Brandt's scattergun approach provided few clues to priorities among the diverse policies he outlined, suggesting that Bonn will press them all and be satisfied to make progress where it can. Nor did he indicate which way Germany might move if forced to face up to hard choices among the potentially conflicting strains.

Negative outbursts from the opposition Christian Democrats suggest that the Brandt foreign policy may face tough going in the Bundestag. They also suggest that Kiesinger may have difficulty maintaining the discipline required to fulfill the responsible opposition role he has promised.

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BOLIVIA

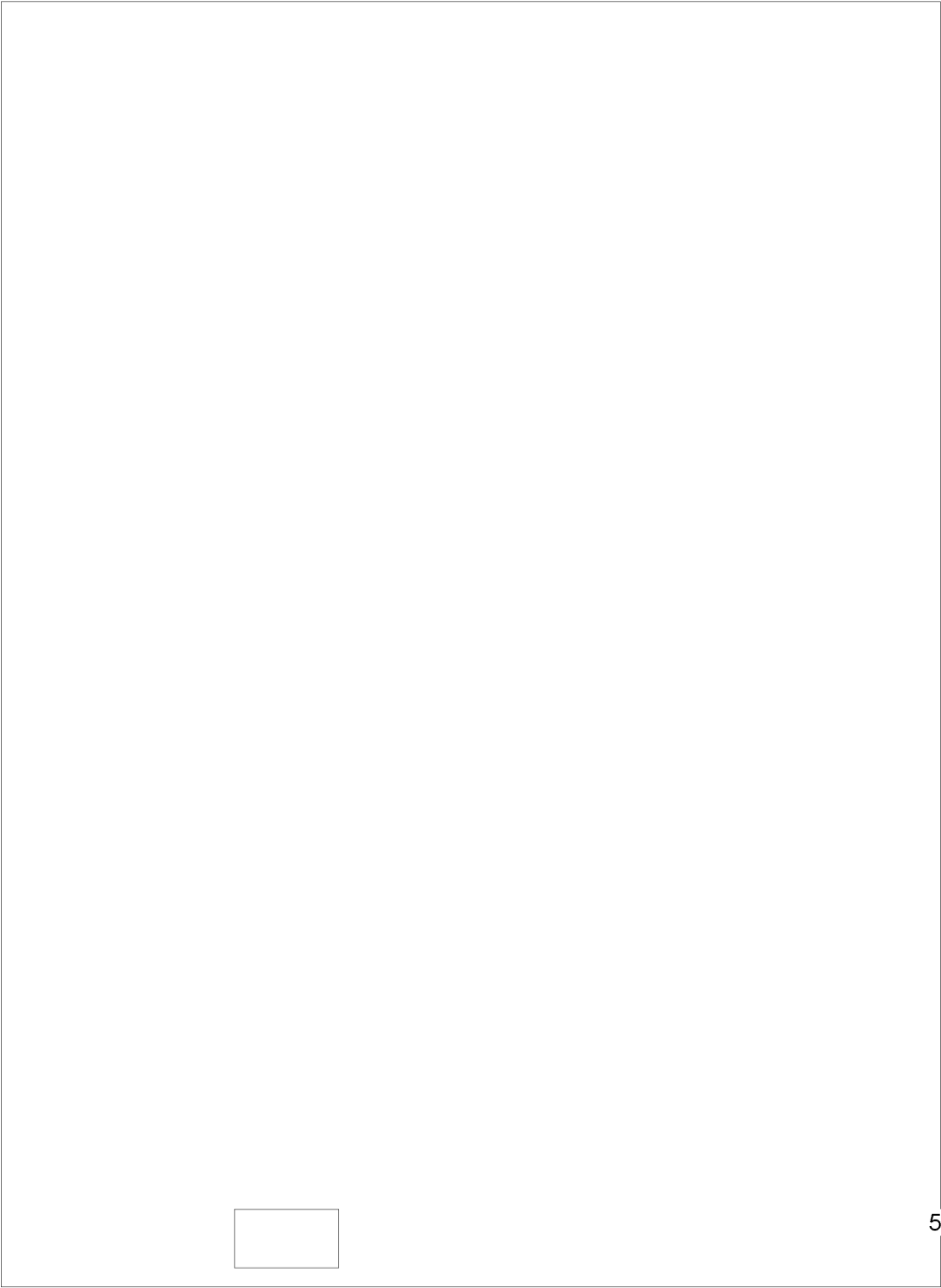
Opposition is growing to the civilian radicals led by Minister of Mines Quiroga. The foreign minister, General Ruiz, has told Ambassador Castro that he and his military colleagues will no longer tolerate being used by the civilians. Ruiz says Ovando has decided to take over the negotiations with Gulf Oil himself and to exclude Quiroga from any further dealings with the company. Some middle-grade officers are calling for Quiroga's dismissal.

All this is still fairly nebulous. On his past record, Ovando is highly unlikely to rein in Quiroga effectively, and neither Ruiz and his associates nor anyone else seems ready to translate discontent into action. What seems to be going on is a typically Bolivian interlude of multilateral intrigue, and the best that can be said is that nobody--least of all Ovando--is really in control.

One man to keep an eye on is the present commander of the armed forces, General Torres.

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A source of the US Embassy says he fears that Quiroga, who knows as well as anyone that power ultimately rests with the man who controls the army units around the capital, has worked out an alliance with the opportunistic Torres.



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Sudan: Revolutionary Command Council President Numayri has further consolidated his control by assuming the prime minister's portfolio. Prime Minister Awadallah, who was made deputy prime minister and foreign affairs minister, came into disfavor a few weeks ago when he said that Communists were necessary for the success of the revolution--a statement which brought into question the regime's supposed Sudanese nationalist orientation. Other changes appear to reflect little beyond Numayri's efforts to erode the civilian influence in the government.

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